

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property  
Organization  
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date  
14 April 2005 (14.04.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number  
WO 2005/033970 A1

(51) International Patent Classification<sup>7</sup>: G06F 17/30,  
17/60

(21) International Application Number:  
PCT/GB2004/004160

(22) International Filing Date:  
29 September 2004 (29.09.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:  
0322880.6 30 September 2003 (30.09.2003) GB

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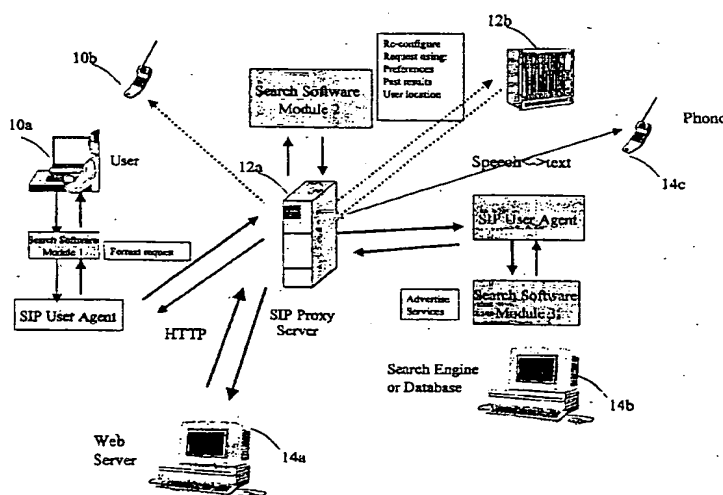
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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every  
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,  
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,  
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,  
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,  
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,  
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,  
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM,  
TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM,  
ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every  
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,  
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM,  
ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),  
European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI,  
FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI,  
SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ,  
GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: DATA RETRIEVAL SCHEME VIA PROXY SERVER



(57) Abstract: A method of purchasing an item, the method enabling a user to search for information on the cost of an item on a distributed computer system, the method comprising: generating a search request for the item at a user terminal; modifying the search request to indicate at least one user preference; forwarding the search request to a server adapted to retrieve data from the distributed computer system, the server adapted to provide a search result to a user terminal selected in accordance with a predetermined user preference dependent on the extent to which the search result conforms with the search request, whereby the user is able to purchase the item at the cost informed by the search result.

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**Published:**

— with international search report

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